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ABSTRACT

Based on a survey of 200 members of the Industrial Communication Council, this script and slide presentation analyzes the career experiences of the 67 communication professionals, 51 men and 16 women, who responded. The script, accompanied by illustrations of appropriate slides, consists of five parts: demographics (the size and type of companies that employ communications professionals and a comparison of numbers of male and female employees); salary (averages, some median salaries, raise potentials, and comparisons between men and women); skills (the kinds of skills professionals bring to the job, and how and when they are used); career feelings (statistics on career choices and individual motivation toward further study); and career choices (a discussion of the transitions involved in moving from technician to supervisor or to middle management). (HAI)

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Miriam Goldfine
Sandra O'Connell

BEYOND COMMUNICATIONS

The Industrial Communication Council has long been interested in the career experiences of its members in particular and of communications professionals in general. In 1976, the Board of Directors of the ICC asked two of its members, Miriam Goldfine of Towers, Perrin, Forster & Crosby and Sandra O'Connell of O'Connell Consulting, to conduct a brief study of the career experiences of the men and women in ICC. That study focused heavily on women. The sample contained 20 of the 30 women members of ICC and 11 of the men on the ICC Board of Directors.

As a result of the findings, the ICC Board commissioned Goldfine and O'Connell to expand their exploratory research. Updated versions of the original questionnaire were sent to all men and women in ICC. The findings were reported to the ICC Annual Seminar in San Francisco, California, on October 24-26, 1977. We have reprinted the script and slides from that presentation in the hope that all communications professionals will find it of value despite the small number of respondents, and that it will lead to more comprehensive research about the career experiences of communications professionals.

Our presentation can be divided roughly into five parts:

-- Demographics - who we are, where we work, what we do

-- Salary - some averages, some medians, some increases and some comparisons between men and women

-- Skills - the kinds of skills we bring to the job and how and when we use them

-- Career feelings - how we react to our career and our particular jobs and how much we influence them

-- Career choices - where we go from here.

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

CS502'87

Slide 1

	1977	1976
Men	51	11
Women	16	20

We'll start with statistics to set the framework. There were 67 people -- 51 men and 16 women -- in the 1977 sample, a disappointing number, considering that ICC has about 200 members. But since the number of men in the 1977 survey was much larger than that in the 1976 survey, it did offer us a chance to study a broader range of jobs. Moreover, some 50% of the women in the 1977 sample did not participate in the 1976 survey. And since the data for women did not change significantly, we are somewhat more confident of our results.

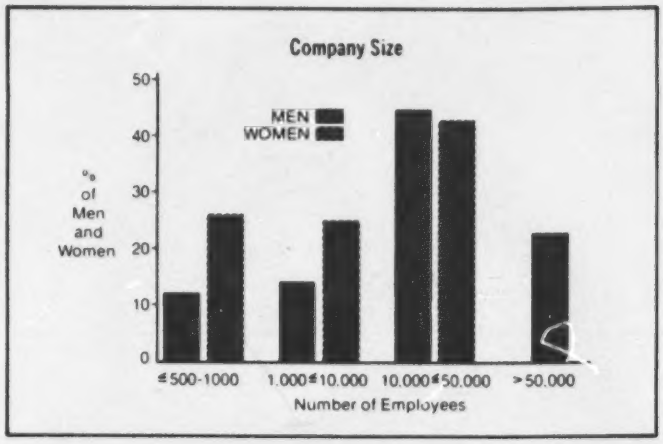
Slide 2

Number of Employees

	under 5,000	5,000 to 10,000	10,000 to 30,000	over 30,000	self-employed
Men	18%	6%	31%	[illegible]	6%
Women	37%	12%	25%	[illegible]	6%

Men, on the whole, work in larger companies than women -- 61% in companies with more than 10,000 employees, contrasted with 44% of the women. Or putting it the other way, almost half the women work in companies with fewer than 10,000 employees, but only about one-quarter of the men do so. But we believe it is significant that there are communicators -- and communications -- in companies of all sizes.

Slide 3



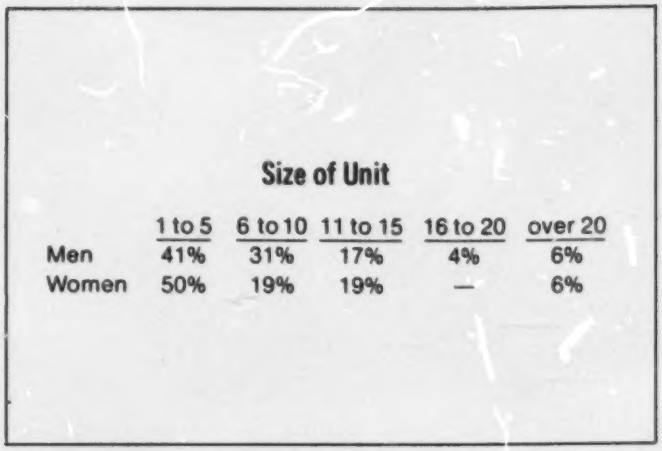
The largest percentage of our people work in companies with between 10,000 and 50,000 employees -- 45% of the men and 43% of the women. And it should be noted that 23% of the men work in very large companies, but none of the women. We recognize that there may be some built-in bias when it comes to corporation size due to ICC's membership requirements, but we do not believe that this is the total answer. It may just be easier for women to break into and get promoted in smaller companies with fewer layers of management than to knock down the doors of the very largest organizations.

Slide 4

Nature of Business	Men	Women
Consulting	10%	12%
Finance/Insurance	19%	19%
Manufacturing	27%	19%
Nonprofit	4%	—
Petrochemical	12%	6%
Pharmaceutical	4%	19%
Publishing	4%	—
Retail	4%	—
Transportation	2%	—
Utility	4%	—
Other	10%	24%

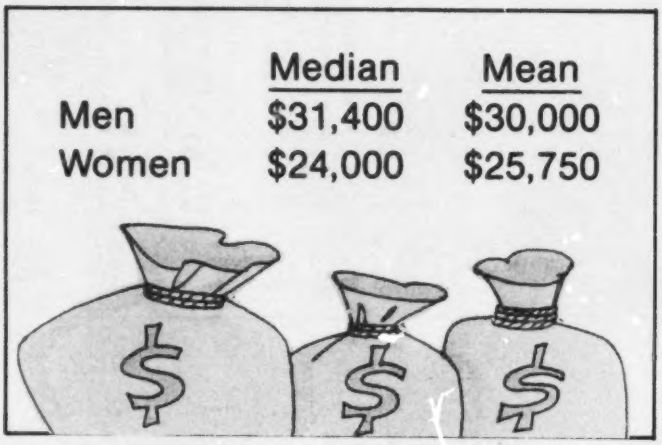
ICC members work for every type of company -- consulting, finance/insurance, manufacturing, nonprofit, petrochemical, pharmaceutical, publishing, retail, transportation and utility. All this says is that our members are scattered all over the lot. The fact that women are not represented at all in some industries is probably due to the small sample.

Slide 5



We asked the survey participants for the number of people in their communications unit. The differences in size that turned up are hard to interpret due to differences in company structure -- are we talking about a centralized or decentralized group? If it is a centralized group, how much influence does it have over the corporation as a whole? But we don't think it really matters. The major point is that communicators manage between two and 20 people. Because of the small size of the unit, it's easy for the supervisor or manager to get trapped into technical work and harder to develop the broader management skills -- the knowledge of group dynamics, interpersonal relationships, broad company operations -- that are needed to move up in the organization. We think this is germane to career path planning, as you will see later in this presentation.

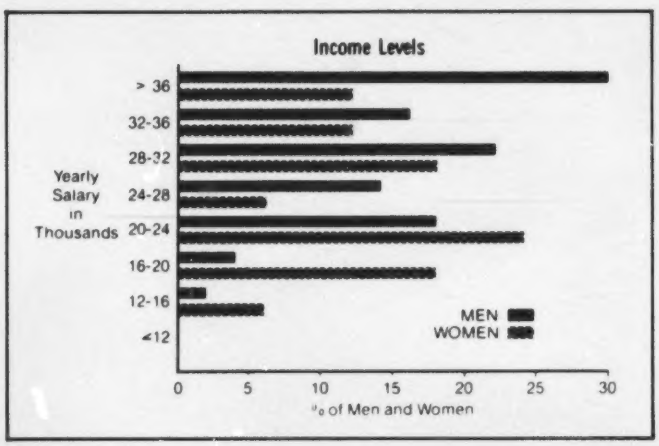
Slide 6



Let's turn to salaries. Men had a median salary of $31,400, contrasted with $24,000 for women. The mean was $30,000 for men and $25,750 for women. With a difference of $7,400 in the median and $4,250 in the mean, we can only conclude that some sex bias still exists. We'll give a nod to tenure -- but no more.

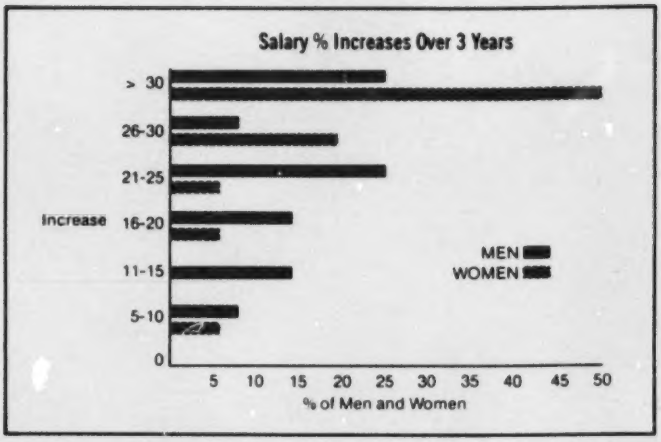
Now for a closer look.

Slide 7



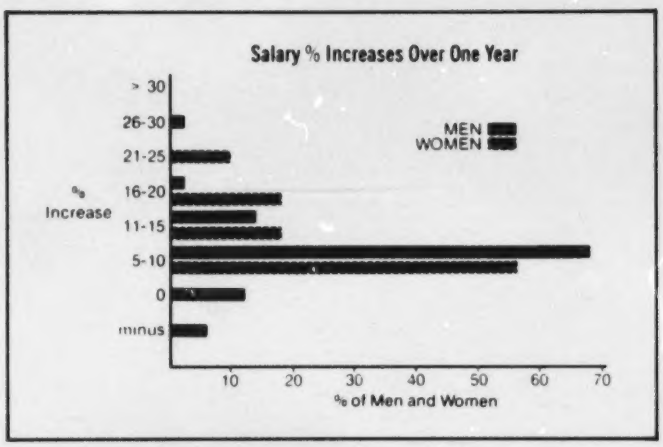
Here's a distribution chart, clearly showing that above $24,000 a year, women trail men in every bracket. Nearly 70% of the men are in the over $28,000 bracket; 48% of the women are under $24,000. The largest percentage of women -- 26% -- are in the $20,000 to $24,000 bracket, while 30% of the men earn more than $36,000 a year.

Slide 8



We also were curious about raises. First we asked about raises over a three-year period. Here the women fared very well. Over 70% increased their salaries by 26% or more in the past three years; only 33% of the men did as well. More women than men said they received their raises as a result of promotions. One can't help but wonder whether some "catch-up" isn't involved here.

Slide 9



Here's a picture of the one-year increases. First of all, note that by far the largest number of people received increases ranging from 5% to 10% of salary; that's comparable to general increases in all job categories throughout industry. But note that more than 40% of the women received raises of 11% or more -- that's on the high side of the traditional compensation package. We attribute these increases to two factors -- first, women are concentrated at the lower end of the salary scale where percentage increases normally tend to be higher; second, the catch-up factor probably contributed to these larger increases.

Slide 10

Men

Writing
Managing communication functions
Editing
Diagnosing communication problems
Oral communication
Graphics
Interviewing

Women

Writing
Diagnosing communication problems
Interviewing
Editing
Audiovisual
Oral communication
Managing communication functions

Skills was the next area we studied. The skills are listed in rank order. As you can see from the list, we are not really beyond print. Writing is still our major skill, and this differs little from last year's results. It is also significant that managing still comes much higher on the list of major skills for men than for women. It is particularly interesting, however, that audiovisual skills rated fifth on the women's list, but did not appear at all on the men's list. That's the newer technology -- a bit beyond print.

We believe this move of women into audiovisual communication is similar to the move of women into data processing. Studies have shown that these newer areas are relatively culture free -- with no inherent sex bias -- truly giving women equal opportunity.

Slide 11

	Males	Females
40-50% time spent managing	47%	25%
40-50% time spent writing	29%	25%
40-50% time spent in craftsmen tasks, other than writing	23%	50%

We thought it would be interesting to investigate this male/female division a little more closely. As you can see, both men and women spend about one-quarter of their time writing. But the men are spending almost half of their remaining time managing, while the women are involved in a variety of technical jobs other than writing. This is truly significant. It indicates the continued technical orientation of women's jobs -- a potential stumbling block to career progress.

Slide 12

Men		Women
55%	Shape career	37%
63%	Get information	50%
45%	Change direction	19%
23%	Need change	44%
68%	Career satisfaction	62%

As we did in 1976, we asked survey participants about their career feelings. In general, the men were more positive than women in every area.

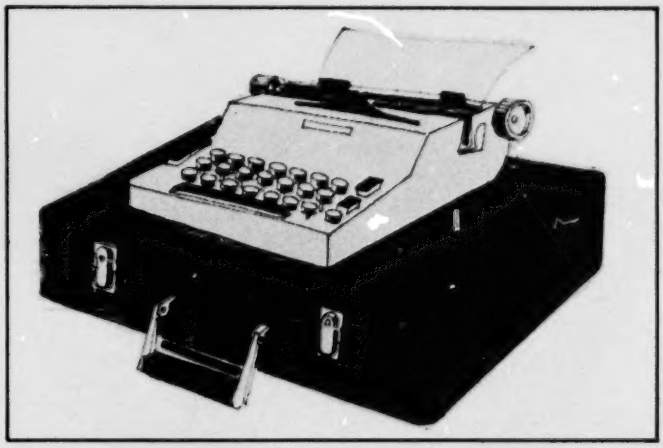
-- 55% of the men felt they had a personal influence over their careers, but only 37% of the women

-- 63% of the men believed they were successful in getting the information they needed to plan their careers, but only 50% of the women

-- 45% of the men felt they had the freedom to change career directions, but only 19% of the women.

Interestingly, only 23% of the men felt the need to change, while 44% of the women did. Overall, 68% of the men and 62% of the women were satisfied with their careers. We find this positive response on the part of the women a bit confusing. It seems to conflict somewhat with their answers to earlier questions.

Slide 13



Let's try to put it all together; let's go not only beyond print but beyond communications. That leads us to the dichotomy that turns up at meeting after meeting of ICC. Many of our craftsmen -- to use Maccoby's terms -- want to be gamesmen: They want to be part of top management while retaining their craftsmanship. We took the liberty of comparing the skills and responsibilities of our ICC members with those described by Maccoby in his analyses of corporate types.

Slide 14

ICCers Choose Communications

Men — 75% Women — 81%

The study shows that most ICCers consciously "pick & pursue" rather than "fall into" communications as a profession: 75% of the men and 81% of the women responded that way. The figure for the men is even more impressive when you consider those men -- a total of 14% -- who said they became corporate communicators in a progression line from previous communications-related experience. We know most communicators enjoy and take pride in their profession. We need no more evidence than this meeting, for it indicates a desire to learn more about the craft.

Slide 15

The Craftsman

- — oriented toward knowledge and skills
- — senses limitations
- — relies on self
- — motivated by challenge of the problem

Let's look at current thinking through the eyes of Michael Maccoby, author of The Gamesman. Here's his definition of a craftsman:

"The craftsman...has a sense of self-worth based on knowledge, skill, discipline, and self-reliance. More than any other character type, he has a sense of limits -- of materials, energy, knowledge, and the moral constraints -- that must be respected to live a good life."

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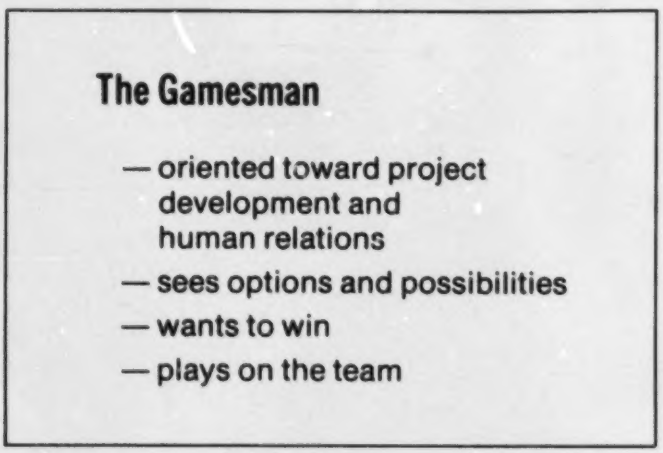
"Although the craftsman wants to do well and make money, he is motivated even more by the problem to be solved, the challenge of the work itself, and his satisfaction in creating something of quality. ...he feels more at home working in a small group or on a project with a defined and understandable structure. He wants to stay with the product from conception to completion."

Slide 16


The Gamesman
— oriented toward project development and human relations
— sees options and possibilities
— wants to win
— plays on the team

And here's Maccoby's conception of the gamesman:

"The modern gamesman is best defined as a person who loves change and wants to influence its course. He likes to take calculated risks and is fascinated by technique and new methods. He sees a developing project, human relations, and his own career in terms of options and possibilities, as if they were a game.... Unlike other business types, he is energized to compete not because he wants to build an empire, not for riches, but rather for fame, glory, the exhilaration of running his team and of gaining victories."

Slide 17

Craftsman		Gamesman
Knowledge, skills	⟷	Project development and human relations
Limitations	⟷	Options and possibilities
Self-reliance	⟷	Team player
Motivated by problem	⟷	Wants to win

Now for a contrast between the two types. As you can see, they demand very different behavior styles and very different skills. Is it possible to be both craftsman and gamesman? We doubt it. It is important that each of us recognize that both careers can be rewarding; both can be valuable to the organization, but it's tilting at windmills to expect a craftsman to be brought into top management. You have to make the choice -- and a very individual one it is.

Slide 18

If you opt for the managerial role, you might find a bit of guidance in the theories of Margaret Hennig and Anne Jardim, authors of The Managerial Woman. They say:

> "...career paths leading ultimately to the most senior levels of management inevitably and critically depend on that first important transition from technical or specialist supervision to the broader and much less precise role of a middle manager."

Some of the shifts Hennig and Jardim believe critical are:

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We'd like to wind up our report with a few conclusions under each of our major headings. ICC members hold jobs in all kinds of organizations -- of all sizes. We find that a plus. It means that the value of employee communications is recognized by a broad spectrum of management. It means, too, that jobs are available in many parts of the country, in many kinds of cities, in many environments. You don't have to go to New York -- or, more precisely, Fairfield County -- to be a successful communicator.

The salary picture has brightened a bit for women. A few have reached the higher ranges. However, even with catch-up increases, that $7,400-a-year difference in the median still exists. Because of ICC membership criteria, we had no entry-level salaries for comparison. Perhaps it is there that we will find the real beginnings of equal pay for equal work.

It is clear from the study that we are not beyond print. The written word is still the communicator's forte. But there are some indications that the newer people -- particularly the women -- are moving beyond print with their audiovisual skills.

Since most of our members choose communications as a profession -- and since many of them have spent virtually their whole careers in the field -- it is not surprising that the level of career satisfaction is high. But once again the sex division is evident, with women still feeling less positive about their personal influence over their careers, their ability to get information about their careers and on their current jobs.

Communicators -- like other craftsmen -- are faced with a difficult choice in planning their futures. As we noted, people rarely enter communications by accident. The opportunities and rewards of remaining a skilled resource to management are great -- and for many people totally satisfying.

But the itch to be part of management is there in many of us. And we do not believe you can scratch that itch with a pencil or a typewriter. You need the broader human relations skills, the broader corporate perspective outlined by Hennig and Jardim.

Only you can decide whether you want to go Beyond Print or Beyond Communications. The choice is a very personal one.